

# Monmouth County Cooperative Extension



## 2009 Annual Report

### Our Vision

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County helps individuals, groups and organizations to address their needs, problems and concerns. We identify issues and provide the leadership, organizational skills and commitment to develop appropriate solutions through the educational process.

### Our Mission

Helping the diverse population of Monmouth County adapt to a rapidly changing society and improve their lives by applying current science-based information. Our focus is on issues and needs relating to Agriculture and the Environment; Management of Natural Resources, Food Safety, Quality, Nutrition, and Health; Family Stability; Economic Security and Youth Development.

### Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Links the U.S. Department of Agriculture; New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station at Rutgers - The State University, The School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and New Jersey county governments to provide practical education for all people. While our name changed slightly again, our mission remains focused on key extension issues. RCE faculty and staff provide outreach programs in Agriculture and Resource Management, Sea Grant Extension, 4-H Youth Development, and Family and Community Health Sciences.

The staff is supported by dedicated groups of trained volunteers who serve on advisory boards and who increase our educational outreach and services to Monmouth County.

This annual report highlights some of our program outreach in 2009.

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New Jersey Agricultural  
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4000 Kozloski Road, PO Box 5033  
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## Agriculture and Resource Management

During 2008-2009, our group has revamped internal operations to better serve increasing client demands. The Monmouth County clientele base includes commercial agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, homeowners, governmental agencies, and natural resource interests. Agricultural Agents Richard Obal and William Sciarappa, Horticulturist Diane Zahorsky and Program Assistant Vivian Quinn again reached record numbers of clientele through new programs, services and applied research activities. Our extension departments work with USDA-NRCS, Farm Service Agency, Freehold Soil District and Shade Tree Commission all within the Agricultural Building to efficiently serve county clients.

The agricultural industry in Monmouth County is very diverse, dynamic and economically strong. Total farm sales in 2008 were \$88 million (4th in State) on 56,066 acres of land. Statewide the county ranks 1st in equine breeding and training facilities, roadside and community farmers markets, pasture acreage (15,000); 2nd in nursery and floriculture crop production, horse farms (960), Asian vegetables and pumpkins; 3rd in sweet corn, sod production and Christmas tree farms; 5th in soybean, pepper and tomato production; 7th in hay and forage.

### Extension Outreach

Agribusiness in Monmouth County provides food, forage, fiber, feed, ornamental products and services. Our educational programs enhance the financial viability of these operations and helps preserve our environment. Outreach topics were landscape and nursery production, sustainable farming practices, specialty crop production, equine pasture management, water issues, pesticide use, pest management, farm viability, regulatory matters and agricultural methods.

- 12 major agricultural meetings were held with 938 farmers, horticulturists and educators in attendance.
- 72 educational presentations were made to a combined audience of 3,476.
- Communication categories totaled 3,368 phone responses and 1,056 client emails.
- 9 county newsletters with 9,432 farm family readers.
- 55 certified Rain Garden Specialists and Educators were trained in the County Ag Building.
- 23 public and over 100 private gardens were constructed for water and soil conservation.

Farmland Preservation - Cooperative Extension has played a prominent educational and advisory role for municipal and county boards and the farming community in preserving the agricultural land base. Over 12,000 acres of farmland on over 170 farms have been permanently preserved. This represents nearly 20% of the agricultural land in the county.

## Resource Management

Rapid development and land use changes have put our water quality and quantity at risk from many sources of pollution. Extension programming in cooperation with Monmouth County Watershed Partnership has communicated to citizens ways to protect our water supplies. This training has led to better identification of pollutant problems and environmental planning. As a result, over two million dollars in funding was obtained for remediation projects in the last few years. These projects are nearing completion in the Wreck Pond and Colts Neck watershed which provides a better understanding of non-point source pollutants, determine land use patterns, validate use of new methods for tracking sources of bacteria and other pathogens and document impacts from farmland, forests, fields and open space.



## Marine Extension Program 2010

Marine Agent Gef Flimlin is continuing his work with the use of High Hydrostatic Pressure Processing for Hard Clams. The process subjects clams to 45,000 psi pressure which kills all the bacteria in the shellfish and shucks the meat entirely from the shell. Research shows that the processed clams are liked equally by clam consumers when matched against a traditionally shucked product but the pressure processed clam may be safer bacteriologically. Such an application for a value added product for the shellfish industry in the Raritan Bay or prove very productive and rewarding. There have been several meetings with the Shop Rite Supermarkets/Wakefern Distributors which has raised their interest in the process and their desire to market the "shuckless shellfish" products.

Agent Flimlin also has been co-authoring educational literature with other extension agents and specialists in the region. Three new fact sheets are "Planning for Success in Your Aquaculture Business", "Freshwater Aquaculture Species for the Northeast", "Marine Aquaculture Species for the Northeast", and "Aquaculture Systems for the Northeast." [www.nrac.umd.edu/publications/factSheets.cfm](http://www.nrac.umd.edu/publications/factSheets.cfm)

Agent Cara Muscio has worked on programs related to coastal water quality and recreation in the Jersey Shore Area. In addition to assisting Agent Flimlin with the educational opportunities and water quality aspect of the Barnegat Bay

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Shellfish Restoration Program, the two agents collaborated to create: [www.rcr.rutgers.edu/seafoodsafety](http://www.rcr.rutgers.edu/seafoodsafety) - the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Seafood Safety website. This website provides research based information for consumers to make appropriate decisions regarding the benefits and risks of seafood in their diet. Agent Muscio is involved in several Regional Stormwater Management Committees in Monmouth County, and with the collaboration of Agent Sciarappa has completed an Agricultural Assessment of the Wreck Pond Watershed for the Wreck Pond Regional Stormwater Management Plan. Agent Muscio also participates on the steering committee of the NEW NJ Clean Marina Program, the Barnegat Bay Science and Technical Advisory Committee, and other local organizations. She continues to research the problem of expired marine flares and their proper disposal for both safety and protection of water quality, and has been compiling information on NJ Summer Shore Safety for Jersey Shore residents and tourist populations. Cara also worked with MATES student Dan Coviello to help develop better methods for volunteer bacterial water quality monitoring. This data was used to work with the Shellfish Restoration Program volunteers, as well as the Master Naturalist/Environmental Stewards programs. Cara also worked with MATES student Dan Coviello to help develop better methods for volunteer bacterial water quality monitoring. This data was used to work with the Shellfish Restoration Program volunteers, as well as the Master Naturalist/Environmental Stewards programs.

In addition, Cara has teamed up with Rich Mohr, Ocean County Agriculture Agent, to promote water conservation and stormwater reduction through sustainable landscaping practices. The program is based on the Low Maintenance Landscaping for the Barnegat Bay Watershed Guide and educates homeowners and property managers about best management practices in landscaping that are water and environment friendly. In 2009, they created a demonstration network of sites showcasing sustainable landscaping practices, as well as a website for the program. Information on these and all of Cara's programs can be found at [ocean.rce.rutgers.edu](http://ocean.rce.rutgers.edu).

## Master Gardeners

Twenty four Monmouth County residents successfully completed the Master Gardener program in 2009, which entailed 60 hours of formal training, followed by at least 60 hours each of community volunteer service. Monmouth County has trained a total of 314 Master Gardeners since its inception in 1999, retaining 184 active Master Gardeners. Master Gardeners provided 20,660 hours of volunteer service in 2009, and responded to over 3,915 gardening inquiries from the public on the Helpline. Of the total hours of volunteer time, 3,640 hours were spent performing consultation and diagnostic duties at Helpline events, 5925 hours were spent performing Community Outreach where the



public was educated on horticulture on an informal basis, and 764 hours were spent formally teaching the public through the Speakers Bureau. These volunteer areas alone, totaling 10,329 hours, which calculates into a cost factor of \$289,212.

## Community Projects

- Master Gardeners participated in the development and/or continuing efforts of 11 Community Gardens throughout the county, donating over 3000 pounds of produce from them to various food pantries. These gardens were in Wall, Middletown, Freehold (4 sites), Keyport, Tinton Falls, West Long Branch, Belmar, and Allentown.
- Master Gardeners participated in 82 Community Service projects throughout the county, with 114 members.

## Speaker's Bureau

- Presented 51 programs at 44 different venues, reaching over 1,000 people and involving 34 different speakers.
- Speakers Bureau has now developed 28 different presentations.

## Educational Outreach

- Educational displays at 11 public venues.
- Outreach displays included using natives in the landscape, attracting beneficial insects, gardening with less pesticides, butterfly gardening, and composting.

## 2009 Highlights

- Year four of the Junior Master Gardener program began in April, with 14 children involved in 8 indoor and outdoor classes, harvesting 1,129 pounds of produce.
- Plant a Row for the hungry garden behind the Agriculture Building yielded over 1,800 pounds of produce that was donated to Open Door Food Pantry in Freehold.
- Children's Committee organized their second 'Bugs, Birds, and Beyond' children's educational day in September, with over 200 in attendance, including 4-H, scouting troops, and Junior Master Gardeners.

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## Family and Community Health Sciences in Monmouth County

The programs and services that are delivered by the Department of Family and Community Health Sciences (FCHS) focus on food, nutrition, health and wellness. Through education and outreach, the department has increased the public's awareness of healthier lifestyles. FCHS is actively engaged in developing communities and lending its expertise in the areas of policy development and implementation and community empowerment through its participation in several county and community based committees.

FCHS work is strengthened through volunteerism and collaboration. This year, FCHS worked with a student intern, thus playing a role in the preparation of future health professionals while enhancing community and student learning experiences, focusing on basic nutrition and food safety lessons to further expand the outreach of services to our community residents.

The Department of FCHS has been working closely with the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and corporations to promote the message, "Get Moving—Get Healthy NJ." In 2008, the virtual walking program, Walk Point to Point NJ, was launched. This website provides tips, motivational materials, and tracking mechanisms to encourage people to maintain active lifestyles whether they are pursuing physical activity goals as an individual or with a group. For more information visit [www.getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu](http://www.getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu).

School Wellness programs emphasize the importance of incorporating the concepts of health and physical activity into the academic curriculum and overall school environment. FCHS has worked with a number of school districts and after-school programs to provide workshops, in-services, and other family programs for administrators, staff, and parents at all educational levels.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education (SNAP-Ed) was established in New Jersey in 1997 to provide nutrition education to limited resource adults, seniors, SNAP participants and children in school systems which have 50% or more children who are receiving free



or reduced school lunches. The desired outcomes of our education are as follows: improve diets and nutritional welfare; increased knowledge of the essentials of human nutrition; increased ability to select and buy food that satisfies nutritional needs; improve practices in food production, preparation, storage, safety and sanitation; and increased ability to manage food budgets and related resources.

The SNAP-Ed program utilizes trained community educators to provide this education within the community. They also use USDA food commodities, provided by the Food Bank of Monmouth/Ocean Counties, to assist in their teaching efforts.

In 2008-2009, over 1,500 individuals had participated in FCHS activities and various health fairs. Other outreach efforts encompass conferences, train-the-trainer sessions, lunch and learns, staff in-services, classroom based training, and community outreach activities. Through all of those services we have had a combined audience total of over 2,500 individuals with approximately 550 meetings. In addition, the Visions newsletter, published three times a year, was distributed to more than 700 individuals per issue. FCHS provides nutrition education through education to promote good health and develop healthy partnerships to build healthy lifestyles.



## Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County

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Office Hours: 8:30 am to 4:30 pm  
Monday - Friday

PHONE: 732-431-7260  
FAX: 732-409-4813

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## Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Director Lillian G. Burry  
Deputy Director, Robert D. Clifton  
John D'Amico  
Amy A. Mallet  
John Curley



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## 4-H Youth Development Program

The 4-H Youth Development Program of Monmouth County offers youth a safe, non-formal educational environment – a place where they feel connected and valued. In 2009 over 1,500 youth in Monmouth County, grades K-13, participated in a variety of opportunities including 4-H clubs, school enrichment programs, special interest groups, afterschool programs and local, state and national events. Participation in the 4-H program helps youth master life skills and understand generosity by becoming active, engaged citizens. There are also continuing opportunities for youth to become proficient in leadership and experience personal growth and independence.

### Volunteers

Volunteers are essential to the successful delivery of the 4-H programs. This year, 72 adult volunteers donated, on average, 220 hours preparing for club meetings and guiding youth in the program. According to the Independent Sector, the value of volunteer time in New Jersey is \$23.62/hour. This translates to more than \$374,000.00 in service being donated to our Monmouth County 4-H program. Also included are our youth volunteers, teens who share their skills with the younger 4-H members and with other youth in their communities. Six new teens were trained and worked together with over 15 other youth volunteers throughout the year. Their time and talent given is very important since younger members look to them as role models.

### Clubs

Trained club leaders worked with 33 4-H clubs in 2009, serving as instructors and mentors. These clubs meet at various locations throughout the county in rural, suburban and urban settings. Our mission is to implement a youth development “hands-on learning” approach that meets the needs of young people in a positive way. Youth develop many life skills by participating in specific project areas of their choice such as animal science, service and citizenship, clogging, environmental science, equine, public speaking, expressive arts, and rocketry.

### Service

4-H has a long history of engaging young people individually and collectively in solving problems and making a difference in their communities. Monmouth County 4-H members are actively involved in the planning and implementation of various community service and service learning projects such as beach clean up, clothing collections, food drives, and more. Service learning takes community service one step further by joining service with education focusing on specific community issues. Not only does this give our youth increased insight into their communities, but overall, families are positively affected by the projects and programs that the youth develop and deliver.

### Camp Highlights

Thirty-three Monmouth County 4-H'ers participated in a science camp program held in June. This environmental weekend camp experience provided hands-on, outdoor educational opportunities, fostered teamwork and cooperation, and offered leadership skill building for the youth. They each gained a greater awareness of the need for stewardship of our earth and a connection with the outdoors through hiking, boating, archery, cooking, crafts, and games.

## Faculty and Staff

### Agriculture Department 732-431-7260 ext. 61

**Richard G. Obal,**  
County Agricultural Agent, County  
Extension Department Head

**William Sciarappa,**  
Supervisor, County Agricultural & Resource  
Management Agent

**Diane Zahorsky,** Home Horticulturist

**Vivian Quinn,** Program Assistant

**Theresa Hansen,** Secretary

**Madgeline Quince,** Secretary

### 4-H Department 732-431-7263 ext. 64

**Ellen Williams,**  
Supervisor, 4-H Agent

**Virginia Krzyzanowski,** Program Associate

**Rita Silvestri,** Secretary

**Gladys Tarantino,** Secretary

### Family and Community Health Sciences 732-431-7271

**Rachel J. Tansey,**  
Supervisor FCCHS Program Associate

**Sharese Porter,**  
FCCHS Sr. Program Coordinator

**Sandie Merritt,** Secretary

**Shakkie Clark,** SNAP-Ed Community Asst.

**Jennifer Gardia,** SNAP-Ed Community Asst.

**Amanda Nail,** SNAP-Ed Community Asst.

### Rutgers Master Gardeners

Helpline – 732-303-7614

M-F 9 am – 4 pm

E-mail questions –

[mgarden@co.monmouth.nj.us](mailto:mgarden@co.monmouth.nj.us)

For more info visit our website:

[www.visitmonmouth.com/07050coopext](http://www.visitmonmouth.com/07050coopext)

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A Monmouth County 4-H weekend arts camp hosted 42 youth in August. The camp was open to K-12 and a variety of age appropriate arts activities were provided. Teen leaders were involved in teaching workshops such as songwriting, creative movement and decorative cooking. All campers were encouraged to bring to camp any art form that they would like to share and a talent showcase took place each evening. Individual self-expression was fostered and recognition without judgment, since there was no competition during camp. Each child increased their creativity by participating.

## Grants

Monmouth County 4-H Youth Development collaborated with several afterschool sites in the county on 21st Century Community Learning Center and Easter Seal programs. Rutgers provided programming and activity related services to the youth at each site. Specific 4-H programs included instruction on gardening, nutrition, drama and other science areas.

**National 4-H Council Youth in Action Grant**, funded by Cumberland Farms provided \$1,400.00 in funding:

Monmouth and Ocean County 4-H united in involving their 4-H'ers in providing recreational materials for hospitalized youth. Each of the participating clubs created or collected recreational supplies and resources to be used by hospitalized children and their families. The intent of

the program was to provide recreational diversion to youth and families experiencing the physical and emotional trauma of hospitalization. Forty five youth and 6 adults in Monmouth and Ocean County 4-H participated. The audiences benefiting from the program were youth and families in the Pediatric Day Stay program of Jersey Shore Rehab; pediatric ward of Centra State Hospital, and Ronald MacDonald House. 4-H staff, volunteers and 4-H'ers from Monmouth and Ocean counties personally delivered the items to the sites.

## Collaborations

For the past 35 years, the Monmouth County 4-H Youth Development Program has worked cooperatively with the Monmouth County Park System, partnering to present the Monmouth County Fair. This collaboration has been a positive, productive effort, benefiting not only Monmouth County but thousands of other people who visit and enjoy the Fair each year. The Park System also works with 4-H to provide camping facilities so many of our 4-H youth, teens and families can enjoy outdoor, educational opportunities in Monmouth County.

Other community agencies that are valued partners have been United Way of Monmouth County, Monmouth County Workforce Investment Board, school districts throughout Monmouth County, the YMCA of Western Monmouth County, and at a national level, the National 4-H Council.

Photo credits: Front cover: (l. to r.) Navine Boggavarapu, Joe Sapia, S. Wolfe. Inside Page 1: B. Sciarappa. Inside Page 2: Vivian Quinn. Inside Page 3: R. Tansey, R. Tansey. Back cover: (l. to r.) Navine Boggavarapu, Adrienne Coleman, Meg Whitehouse.

***For a comprehensive list of our publications visit [www.njaes.rutgers.edu](http://www.njaes.rutgers.edu).***

Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and County Boards of Chosen Freeholders. Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a unit of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

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